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| <b>Maricopa County Policy</b><br>General Travel Policy                           |  | <b>Number:</b> A2313  |
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## I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent procedures governing the travel activities for Elected Officials and employees to ensure effective management of travel and travel-like expenditures in accordance with ARS §38-621 et seq. This policy defines the overall responsibility for travel and travel-like expenditures. Specific information and detailed procedures are contained in the Maricopa County Travel Manual, which is located at [ebc.maricopa.gov/library/finance](http://ebc.maricopa.gov/library/finance). The Travel Manual may be updated to accommodate the effective administration of the policy. All updates will be made through a combined effort between the Finance, Materials Management and Human Resources Departments.

This policy, A2313 General Travel Policy, supercedes the following Maricopa County Travel and Travel-Related Policies: A2314 Travel Agency; A2315 Travel Advances; A2316 Conferences, Seminars, and Meetings; A2317 Travel – Transportation; A2318 Travel – Rented Motor Vehicles; A2319 Travel – Air Travel; A2320 Travel – Meals/Per Diem; A2321 Travel – Incidental Expenses; A2322 Travel – Lodging; A2323 Travel – Out of Country; and Federal Publication 1542 – Per Diem Rates. The above-referenced policies and all department policies are revoked except where noted.

## II. DEFINITIONS

The following terms are used throughout the General Travel Policy (A2313):

**Allowance:** A fixed amount of money permitted.

**Approval Authority:** An Elected Official, the County Administrative Officer (CAO), Chief Officer, Chief Deputy or Department/Special District Director as appropriate in relation to the traveler. Generally, the Approval Authority is the next highest level in the organization above the traveler. Specifically, (unless otherwise designated in writing pursuant to Section IV.B.) Approval Authorities are as follows:

- Elected Official or Chief Deputy for all employees in an elected official's office. (See Section X for Elected Officials)
- Board of Supervisors Chairman for the CAO.
- The CAO for all Chief Officers and CAO Direct Reports.
- Chief Officers for all Direct Reports and Department Directors within their agency.
- Department Directors for all employees within their department.
- Superior Court Presiding Judge or designee for Judicial Branch employees
- Board of Directors Chairman or Chairman's designee, for Special District Chief Executives

**Commercial Establishment:** A recognized and accepted business that provides goods and/or services.

**Contract Employee:** There are two types of "contract" individuals in Maricopa County and Special Districts.

- Payroll Contract Employee – An employee paid through payroll and consistent with the definition given in the Human Resources Employee Compensation Plan. Briefly, "an employee whose terms and conditions of employment are subject to a written agreement."
- Contractor – These individuals are not considered employees of the County/Special District. Payments to contractors are made via the Accounts Payable system as opposed to the Payroll system. These contractors are subject to the terms and conditions of their contract regarding any payment or reimbursement for travel expenses. All travel expenses should be monitored by the relevant contract administrator.

**County Contracted Travel Agency:** A travel agency with a contract with Maricopa County which by Intergovernmental Agreement Special Districts can access for travel services.

**Department:** A department is a specialized division within a large organization. As an example, the Department of Finance, Office of Management and Budget and Human Resources.

**Duty Post:** The place where the Elected Official or employee spends the largest portion of the regular workday or working time. (A.R.S. §11-215)

**Elected Official:** A person who is chosen by ballot to an office or post of authority by eligible voters to represent them in a public capacity and perform the duties for which they were elected.

**Emergency:** A serious or urgent situation or occurrence that happens unexpectedly, demands immediate action, and requires an exception to any part of this policy. A letter must accompany the travel documents that explains the emergency and the letter must be signed by the Approval Authority.

**Employee:** A person who is paid a wage, salary, or stipend from public monies in accordance with official entries on a County payroll. This definition includes all classified, unclassified, temporary, or contract employees. (See **Contract Employee** definition.)

**Federal Travel Management Policy (FTMP):** A division of the U.S. General Services Administration which provides information on Federal travel management policies and travel-related activities for the Federal Government. FTMP sets the domestic per diem rates for Federal agency travelers while on official business for the Government. These rates are part of Appendix A to Chapter 301 of the Federal Travel Regulations and are updated on a fiscal year cycle, effective October 1 of each year. The County/Special District uses these rates for lodging, meal and incidental expense reimbursements. See [www.policyworks.gov](http://www.policyworks.gov) (click on link to Travel Management Policy).

**Hours Worked:** Employees to whom the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) applies (non-exempt employees) may be eligible to have some hours counted as "hours worked" while in travel status. "Hours worked" may generally be counted under the following circumstances:

- A. travel that occurs during the employee's work day; this may include travel from job site to job site.
- B. when out-of-county travel is required and an overnight stay is not required: all time spent traveling between the two destinations may count as "hours worked." However, time spent traveling between an airport or other station and the employee's residence during the employee's departure or return is not considered "hours worked."
- C. when out-of-county travel requires an overnight stay: time spent traveling to the destination is counted as "hours worked" only to the extent that it coincides with the employee's regular work hours. As an example, if a non-exempt employee travels on Saturday or Sunday and it's during the time they would regularly be at work on Monday or Tuesday, the time spent travelling on Saturday or Sunday would be worktime. Travel which occurs outside of the employee's regular work hours may not be counted as "hours worked" unless the employee performs work for the County/Special District while in travel status.

**Incidental Expenses:** Expenses of a minor nature related to County/Special District business or to the traveler's activities while in travel status.

**Lodging Rate:** The base rate defined by the vendor prior to the application of taxes, etc.

**Meals:** Foods served and eaten in one sitting. These include breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Continental breakfasts which only include donuts, bagels, muffins, juice, coffee, etc., are not considered a meal for purposes of this policy.

**Non-Employees:** A person who does not fit the definition of **Employees** as stated in this Policy. A person who is not working for financial or other compensation. A Non-Employee, for the purpose of this policy, is a person providing a service to the County/Special District, e.g., volunteers, MCSO posse members and reserve officers, or witnesses. A Non-Employee could include members of Boards and Commissions if travel expenses are authorized by the Board of Supervisors/Board of Directors via formal action or according to specific statutory authority.

**Non-Reimbursable Expenses:** Expenses generated by traveler which are not considered to be essential.

**Parking – Long-Term:** Leaving a vehicle for extended periods, typically at a station or off-site (located nearby for the specific purpose of providing parking for the station). Long-term parking is not related to the actual length of time the vehicle is left in the garage or lot but rather the rate established for long-term versus short-term parking.

**Parking – Short-Term:** Leaving a vehicle, where payment is required, for short periods of time while conducting business.

**Per Diem:** A daily allowance for lodging (excluding taxes), meals, and related incidental expenses.

**Pre-Paid Expenses:** Any expense paid by the County/Special District before the completion of travel.

**Reasonable Accommodation:** For the purposes of this policy, a reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment in the travel plans which will enable the traveler with a "known" disability to be more comfortable while in travel status. The accommodation generally will be triggered by a request from an individual with a disability, who frequently will be able to suggest an appropriate accommodation. Accommodations must be made on an individual basis because the nature and extent of the accommodation will vary in each case. (In conjunction with the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)). Maricopa County/Special District assumes no responsibility for a contracted transportation, lodging, and/or services company's failure to provide the requested accommodation.

**Special District:** Flood Control District of Maricopa County, Maricopa County Library District, Maricopa County Stadium District.

**Station:** Any airport, bus terminal, train depot, or similar transportation departure or arrival place.

**Travel Advance:** Funds advanced to the traveler to meet anticipated travel related costs. A travel advance represents a lien against wages.

**Travel Coordinator:** A person designated by the Approval Authority to plan, organize, and manage travel and travel-related activities.

**Travel Expenses:** Costs for registration, transportation, lodging, meals, and incidental expenses directly related to travel.

**Travel Status:** When a traveler is conducting appropriately approved, necessary County/Special District business at least 50 miles away from his designated duty post or residence **and** the period of travel is expected to last a minimum of 12 hours. Travel status starts at the time the traveler departs from his home, office or other authorized point and ends on the day the traveler returns to his home, office, or other authorized point.

**Traveler:** The Elected Official or employee who is in travel status. In addition, any non-employee traveling on County/Special District business, or any person required to travel for extradition or as a witness is included in this definition.

**Vendor:** One who sells goods or services.

### **III. POLICY**

- A. Travel is warranted when personal contact is the most effective method of conducting official government business.
- B. The purpose of the travel must be for the public's benefit and related to the department's business activities.
- C. Travel must be completed within the Department/Special District budget approved by the Board of Supervisors or appropriate Special District board of directors.
- D. When travel is justified, signature of the appropriate Approval Authority is required prior to travel.
- E. All authorized travelers, when representing the County/Special Districts in travel status, may claim allowances and expenses and be reimbursed as provided by law and County/Special Districts policy.
- F. Claims for unauthorized travel expenses will not be honored and are not reimbursable.
- G. The travel must be at least 50 miles away from the traveler's designated duty post or residence, whichever point is authorized by the Approval Authority, and the period of travel is expected to last a minimum of 12 hours. (Some exceptions apply – see Section VI.B.2.a.)
- H. A local conference and/or seminar is not considered travel.
- I. Attendance at conferences, seminars, and meetings should only be approved when essential contacts can be made or significant information obtained which is important to the operation of the Department/Special District or to the enhanced performance of the individual(s).
- J. Departments/Special Districts should send the fewest number of individuals possible to the same seminar, conference, or meeting.
- K. Travel may only be arranged by the Department/Special District Travel Coordinator or other authorized person designated by the Approval Authority.
- L. When making travel arrangements, it is the responsibility of the employee to notify the Department/Special District Travel Coordinator of any reasonable accommodations that may be needed under the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Travel Coordinator will then ensure reasonable accommodation requests are coordinated with travel, transportation, lodging, meals and conference officials, as necessary, so they may comply with the needs of the employee.
- M. Under no circumstances, shall expenses for personal travel be charged to, or be temporarily funded by, Maricopa County or any Special District. Any violations will be referred to the appropriate departmental authority for any necessary action.
- N. Travelers who knowingly and willfully submit falsified travel claims shall be referred to the appropriate departmental/Special District authority for any necessary action.
- O. All authorized travelers, when representing the County/Special Districts in travel status, are covered under workman's compensation in the event an injury occurs while in travel status. Please contact Human Resources – Total Compensation regarding specific questions.

### **IV. AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY**

- A. The Approval Authority has the authority to approve travel requests for their employees and any advisory board or commission members serving their departments. When the Approval Authority is the traveler, the official at the next highest level in the organization must approve the travel request.
- B. Approval Authority may delegate approval authority to another level within their organization (e.g. Division Manager). Such delegated authority must be in writing and on file with the Approval Authority. However, Approval Authority is ultimately responsible for ensuring that all approved travel requests comply with the County/Special District travel policy and funds are available within their budgets for the approved travel.
- C. Waivers to this policy may be requested when a unique situation arises. Waivers must be requested in writing and be submitted to the Approval Authority for approval. If the traveler is the Approval Authority, the official at the next highest level in the organization must approve the waiver.

- D. Each Department/Special District is responsible for managing its own travel budget, and monitoring actual expenditures against budget authority. In addition, the Department/Special District is responsible for coordinating with the Payroll Department to initiate travel advances and travel reimbursements to employees. Further, each Department/Special District is responsible for coordinating with Accounts Payable to initiate advance payments to vendors if appropriate.

## **V. TRAVEL GUIDELINES**

### **A. Most Economical Plan**

To maximize the effectiveness of County/Special District resources allocated to travel activities, all travel plans should be a combination of the most economical and safest travel, lodging and cost of employee time. Employees are encouraged to maximize the use of available reduced fares. For example, while employees are not normally permitted to depart earlier or stay longer than required at

County/Special District expense, this is permissible when the net effect is an overall lower cost for the trip and there is no significant loss of productive employee work time.

### **B. Document Preparation**

Travelers are responsible for preparing travel requests **before** leaving on assignments. Each Department/Special District is required to complete and maintain all Travel Authorization and Expense Forms, "on-site" for all occurrences of travel. All travel authorization and expense information must be maintained for three (3) years. Each Department/Special District may create its own format for travel authorization and expense documentation, however, all the elements contained in the Travel Authorization and Expense Form must be included. **Do not** send Travel Authorization and Expense Forms to Accounts Payable or Payroll. It is the department's responsibility to ensure compliance with all travel policies and the Travel Manual.

### **C. Compensation while in Travel Status**

Some provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) may impact the compensation of some employees while they are in travel status. Refer to Section III – Definitions of this policy under the topical heading "Hours Worked." If you have specific questions concerning compensation of an employee, please contact the Human Resources Department.

### **D. Long-Term Subsistence Travel**

The approval of the County Administrative Officer or for Special Districts the Chairman of the Board of Directors or Chairman's designee is required for long-term subsistence travel and reimbursement, which may be available under the following conditions:

1. An employee is temporarily assigned to a duty post which is not normally a duty post for the employee's department, or
2. The duty post is outside of Maricopa County and requires overnight lodging for the employee.

### **E. Out of the Continental U.S. Travel**

The approval of the County Administrative Officer or for Special Districts the Chairman of the Board of Directors or Chairman's designee is required for travel out of the continental U.S. The following conditions apply:

1. Approval Authority must exercise utmost discretion in approving requests for travel outside of the continental U.S. The conference, meeting or seminar must be unquestionably professional in content and should prevail only if a professional conference, meeting or seminar of similar quality cannot be found within the continental limits of the United States within the year.
2. The maximum Per Diem Rate will be defined by the Approval Authority prior to the travel.
3. Before submitting their claims, travelers should contact the International Division of any banking institution to determine the daily rate of exchange for the location to which they are traveling, if applicable. Bills and receipts will be recorded in terms of foreign currency. The rate of exchange in effect at the time the expenses were incurred is needed for employees to be properly reimbursed.

#### **F. Extended Travel**

In the event a traveler must extend the duration of travel due to an emergency (such as the September 11 attack, illness of traveler, etc.) notification must be made to the Department/Special District at the traveler's earliest opportunity. The travel documentation must be amended to support the additional expenses. This notification must be acknowledged and approved in writing by the Approval Authority.

#### **G. Change to Travel Plans**

Any change to travel plans, which incurs additional expense(s), must be justified as County/Special District business and approved in writing by the Approval Authority. A change in travel plans for personal reasons must be in writing and approved by the Approval Authority **prior to** the change in travel plans. Reimbursement will be limited to the cost of travel by a direct route or on an uninterrupted basis. The traveler will be responsible for any additional costs that are incurred.

#### **H. Completion of Travel**

In order for the County/Special District financial records to remain current, all travel documents should be submitted for reconciliation within **14 days** of completion of travel. If completed Travel Authorization and Expense Forms are not submitted within **30 days**, further recovery actions and/or disciplinary actions may be instituted, including forfeiture of payments to the employee.

An employee contesting the final rejection of an expense reimbursement request under this policy must comply with A.R.S. § 11-622, Claims and Warrants.

### **VI. PROCEDURES**

#### **A. Transportation**

Costs related to the use of various modes of transportation may be claimed as an expense only if receipts accompany claims unless otherwise noted. Transportation other than air or motor vehicle, such as trains or buses, may be used when convenient or economical and their use will not require excessive travel time. Travel should be limited to the most cost-effective method available giving consideration to safety and other concerns. The most economical means of transportation will be used in traveling to and from airports (i.e., shuttle or taxi service, or mileage for use of personal vehicle). To determine the most cost-effective method of transportation, the Department/Special District should consider direct costs as well as the traveler's time. *In the best interests of the County/Special District, reimbursement for transportation expenses will be limited to the amount equal to the most economical mode of transportation.*

## 1. Commercial – Air

Transportation by scheduled airlines shall be at the lowest available airfare rate at the time of trip authorization. A fare other than the lowest rate may be used only when seats are not available at the lowest fare or air travel at a higher cost will result in an overall cost savings to the County/Special District. Department Travel Coordinators can make the all travel arrangements or they may utilize the services of the Contracted Travel Agent.

- a. **Internet Booking:** Internet booking of airflights by using a departmental purchase card to purchase tickets on-line is acceptable and encouraged. Please review the Travel Manual for a listing of all travel vendors.
- b. **County Contracted Travel Agency:** The County Contracted Travel Agency will obtain the lowest fare possible by using the following parameters:

**Departure Window:** A departure window of an hour before and/or an hour after the requested departure or arrival will be used by the County Contracted Travel Agency to obtain the lowest fare possible.

**One-Stop or Connecting Flights:** Alternative flights will be reviewed which include one-stop or connecting flights to ensure the lowest fare possible.

If a Department/Special District is able to obtain a lower price for a confirmed flight with the same flight arrangements via the Internet, the Department/Special District should contact the County's Contracted Travel Agency, make them aware of the lower confirmation.

For more information, please review the Travel Manual for the current County Contracted Travel Agency.

- c. **Miscellaneous Air Travel Issues:** The following is a list of miscellaneous issues related to air travel:
  - Any promotional benefits or material received from an airline or other commercial establishment in connection with official travel may be retained for personal use (see Travel Manual).
  - Flight insurance purchased by the traveler is not reimbursable.
  - The use of privately owned and rented aircraft requires the prior approval of the County Administrative Officer in accordance with Policy A2324, or for Special Districts, the Chairman of the Board of Directors or the Chairman's designee.
  - Chartered aircraft travel is allowed provided a common carrier (scheduled airlines, railroads, or intercity bus systems) is not feasible or an alternative mode of travel is impractical. If approved, chartered air service may only be obtained from FAA licensed commercial flight operators. Chartered aircraft travel must be approved by the County Administrative Officer or for Special Districts, the Chairman of the Board of Directors or the Chairman's designee prior to the travel taking place.



## 2. Rented Motor Vehicles

- a. The use of **rented motor vehicles** must be for the advantage of the County/Special Districts and not for the personal convenience of the traveler. The use of rented motor vehicles should only be considered when rental of a vehicle would result in an overall reduction in the budget expenditure for a particular trip. Only an individual with a valid Arizona driver's license can operate a rented motor vehicle on County/Special District business. The traveler must sign a Driver's License Compliance Affidavit (see Travel Manual) to verify that he or she holds a current driver's license and that the driver's license is not expired, suspended, revoked, etc.
- b. The comprehensive and collision liability insurance offered by the rental car company should be waived when renting a motor vehicle. The County/Special District's self-insurance program provides coverage for physical damage and liability provided the employee is driving within the scope of employment. If the traveler chooses to purchase the comprehensive and collision insurance, be advised that the County/Special District will not reimburse this expense.
- c. Rented motor vehicles are restricted to sub-compact, compact, or mid-size sedans unless a larger vehicle is necessary for cost efficiency because of the number of authorized travelers.

## 3. Personal, County or Special District-Owned Motor Vehicles

Employees using their personal vehicles or County/Special District owned vehicles for travel must have obtained prior Department/Special District authorization and must comply with the policies governing such use.

- a. Private Vehicle Insurance Requirements – A2202
- b. County Vehicle Proof of Insurance – A2203
- c. Use of County Owned Vehicles – A2302
- d. Use of Private Vehicle for County Business – A2324

## 4. Related Transportation Costs

Related transportation costs may include:

- a. Gasoline – reimbursed when a rented motor vehicle is used.
- b. Emergency repairs – for County/Special District vehicles only.
- c. Bridge fees and tolls – simply list on the Travel Authorization and Expense Form – no receipts required.
- d. Local Transportation – taxi, bus, limousine, and streetcars may be reimbursed if use is in County/Special District's best interest – receipts are required.
- e. Parking – Short-term parking may be reimbursed with a receipt or by traveler's statement for metered parking. Long-term parking may be reimbursed **only if** the following applies: If the traveler can demonstrate that it is less expensive to utilize long-term parking rather than pay for round-trip airport shuttle or taxi service, then long-term parking may be claimed as an expense. If the long-term parking option is utilized, the traveler shall provide a quote (may be a

written statement from a verbal quote) from a shuttle or taxi service which will verify the savings. It is the traveler's responsibility to determine and use the most economical option for travel to and from the station. Receipts are required.

## **B. Per Diem Expenses**

A traveler must be in authorized travel status to be eligible for reimbursement of per diem and related travel expenses. Under this system, the per diem allowance for each travel day is established on the basis of the actual amount the traveler is required to pay for lodging plus the maximum allowable rate for meals and incidental expenses (M&IE).

Lodging and M&IE may be claimed according to Federal Travel Management Policy (FTMP) under the header "Domestic Per Diem Rates" (See **Section III – Definitions**). If the destination locality is not specified, the standard reimbursement rate for M&IE will be utilized. On-line per diem rates can be found at the following web site: [www.policyworks.gov/perdiem](http://www.policyworks.gov/perdiem).

### **1. Meals and Incidental Travel Expenses (M&IE)**

- a. An allowance for meals (which includes tips) will be reimbursed as outlined **except** the traveler is not entitled to a reimbursement for a meal if it is provided free on an airplane or is included in conference/seminar registration fees.
- b. Fees or tips will be reimbursed at a combined total of \$2.00 per day for each day that the traveler is in travel status. Examples: fees and tips given to hotel employees including restaurant and room attendants, baggage carriers, airline flight attendants, etc.
- c. Additional incidental expenses (i.e., telephone, fax, and copying charges) may be reimbursed if they are related to County/Special District business and are accompanied by a receipt. These additional expenses must be included on the Travel Authorization and Expense Form.
- d. Expenses incurred for laundry, cleaning, and pressing of clothing are reimbursable as miscellaneous travel expenses **only after** the traveler has incurred five (5) consecutive nights lodging in travel status.
- e. Non-reimbursable expenses cannot be claimed. The following expenses are examples of non-reimbursable expenses: in-room movies, valet service, valet parking, liquor, entertainment, and long-term parking (except as outlined in **Section VI.A.4.e**).

### **2. Lodging**

- a. Lodging costs incurred within 50 miles of the traveler's designated duty post or residence or within Maricopa County cannot be claimed as a travel expense unless the lodging is in the best interest of the County/Special District and has been pre-approved by the appropriate Approval Authority.
- b. Lodging must be at a commercial establishment, and the traveler should always request the lowest available rate (i.e., government, corporate, conference). The Department/Special District Purchase Card should be used to pay for all lodging. In the event the Department/County Special District cannot pay for the lodging using the Purchase Card, reimbursement is available through payroll or, in an emergency, Accounts Payable.

- c. To obtain a reimbursement for lodging either through Payroll or Accounts Payable, the commercial establishment's original itemized receipt is required. Credit card receipts in lieu of the original receipt will not be accepted. Receipts must be marked paid or show a zero balance. Personal expenses must be paid by the traveler and cleared from the final bill at checkout. (The same criteria applies to use of the Purchase Card.)
- d. Expenses for lodging will be reimbursed by using the lower of the rates detailed in FTMP or actual costs (see next Section VI.B.2.e.). If the destination locality is not specified in FTMP, the standard reimbursement rate for lodging will be used. Please note that the Lodging Rate is the base rate before taxes and other items are included.
- e. If lodging expense could **not** be obtained at the rate cited in FTMP, a memorandum must be attached to the travel authorization explaining why it is in the best fiscal interest of Maricopa County or the Special District for the traveler to stay at a particular facility (i.e., conference or training is at the facility and the cost of a rental car or cab rides to the facility would equal or exceed the lodging rate listed in FTMP). A signature by the appropriate Approval Authority on the explanatory memorandum is required.
- f. Only the **single room rate** can be claimed for payment. If a room is shared by two or more travelers, the entire room cost should be paid and the reimbursement claimed by one traveler. A notation should be made on the Travel Authorization and Expense Form of each traveler indicating which traveler claimed the reimbursement for lodging costs.

### **C. Advance Payments**

Payment of expenses **prior to** the scheduled travel dates will be processed using the following guidelines:

#### **1. Payments to Outside Vendors**

Advance payments to vendors to pre-pay registration fees or hotel reservations should be made using the Department/Special District Purchase Card. If the Department/Special District is not able to use the Purchase Card (i.e., vendor does not accept the Purchase Card), the original invoice or conference registration form (one original and one copy), must be attached to the payment voucher and these documents must be submitted together to Accounts Payable for check payment. If the hotel does not accept the purchase card, the travel advance should include the hotel rate and tax.

#### **2. Payments to Travelers**

Travel advances will be available to the traveler on the traveler's paycheck immediately preceding the travel dates. A travel advance for the total estimated budgeted expenses for the trip (less any pre-paid expenses) may be advanced up to 100% at the discretion of the Approval Authority. Manual checks **will not** be initiated for travel advances.

Each Department/Special District is responsible to ensure that travel plans are made in advance and adequate time is allotted to produce advances utilizing the regular payroll cycle. In emergency situations only, Accounts Payable will generate a check utilizing the Advantage nightly cycle. It is the department/Special District's responsibility to provide Accounts Payable with a payment voucher and supporting documentation (i.e., a memo from the Approval Authority explaining the need for payment and a copy of the Travel Authorization and Expense Form with all appropriate signatures.

#### **D. Travel Reimbursements**

Payment of any expenses upon return from scheduled travel will be processed using the following guidelines:

##### **1. Payments to Elected Officials and Employees**

After the travel has been completed, all documentation (original receipts, invoices, etc.) must be submitted and approved by the department/Special District. Receipts for meals are not required because a standard per diem allowance is provided. Reimbursement payments are made to Elected Officials or employees through the payroll system and will be made within the employee's next two paychecks.

##### **2. Payments to Non-Employees**

Non-employees, will be reimbursed by submitting a payment voucher to Accounts Payable. See Sections VII and VIII below for exceptions.

##### **3. Payments to Maricopa County and Special Districts for Unused Travel Advances**

Travel Advances will not exceed the estimated amount of travel-related expenses. If a travel advance was issued, and the travel expenses are less than the advanced amount, the difference between the two amounts must be returned to the County/Special District. The Department/Special District must recoup the funds via payroll deduction or via a personal check from the traveler within two pay periods after travel is completed.

##### **4. Payments from Terminated Elected Officials and Employees**

Prior to the final paycheck issued to any terminated traveler, the Department/Special District shall ensure that all travel advances have been accounted for or repaid to the County/Special District. Any outstanding amount due the County/Special District shall be deducted from the traveler's paycheck prior to issuance. It is the responsibility of each Department/Special District to maintain a register of advances and reimbursements to ensure control over the advances and/or expenditures of all travel funds. If the traveler is no longer an Elected Official or employee, the traveler shall deliver a personal check to be deposited in the appropriate fund by the department. A matter of dispute or non-reimbursement may be referred to the County Attorney's Office for any necessary action or may be reported to the IRS as taxable income.

#### **VII. ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES OR EXCEPTIONS FOR THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

- A. All travel (except for extradition and investigative trips) must be requested on a Training/Travel Request Form which is routed through the chain of command to the Chief Deputy for approval, prior to being submitted to the Sheriff's Office Travel Section.
- B. Requests for travel advances must be received by the Travel Section at least **15 working days** prior to the travel date. The advance will be issued on the paycheck immediately prior to the trip. In the event that a request is too late for an advance to be processed prior to the trip, traveler must use personal funds which will be reimbursed, by paycheck, after trip expenses have been approved.
- C. Airfare and other paid modes of travel shall be obtained using the most appropriate means. Refundable tickets may be best if hearing/trial dates are uncertain or changed.

- D. A travel advance may be requested for 100% of lodging and 75% of the meal allowance. (This is an additional qualifier to **Section VI.C.2.**)
- E. Motor vehicle rental must be authorized in advance by the Sheriff or his designee (except for extradition or investigative trips).
- F. The Sheriff may authorize the use of County vehicles anywhere in this or adjacent states in the conduct of law enforcement, investigations, or extraditions.
- G. Travel under court orders or for investigative purposes are as follows:
  - 1. Employees traveling under court orders or for investigative purposes may be provided sufficient funds from the Office's budgeted funds to defray necessary travel costs.
  - 2. Upon completion of any such travel, all expenditures must be justified.
  - 3. Travel which includes lodging and/or meals shall be subject to the limitations applied to extraditions.
- H. Extradition Trips Exceptions:
  - 1. Per diem rates for extradition trips are predetermined. Please see the Sheriff's Office Travel Section for details.
  - 2. A travel advance may be requested for 100% of the meal allowance for extradition cases only.
  - 3. Travel advances for extradition trips will be made in **cash**. The balance of cash advances for extradition trips must be returned in cash, within **two (2) working days** of the employee's return.
  - 4. Vouchers for parking County vehicles at or near Sky Harbor Airport are provided to travelers by the Sheriff's Office Travel Section. (Therefore, **Section VI.A.4.e.** does not apply to Sheriff's Office travel.)

#### **VIII. ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES OR EXCEPTIONS FOR THE COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE**

- A. Requests for travel must be accompanied by a designated County Attorney's request form. See the Travel Coordinator for the appropriate form.
- B. When APAAC funding and RICO funding are requested, travel arrangements will not be initiated until approval has been received. After approval has been received, specific guidelines must be followed. See the Travel Coordinator for details.
- C. Airfare and other paid modes of travel shall be obtained using the most appropriate means. Refundable tickets may be best if hearing/trial dates are uncertain or changed.
- D. For information regarding setting up taxis for victims or witnesses, refer to the County Attorney Office's Department procedures.
- E. Out of State Witness Travel:

Travel for out of state witnesses is mandated by state statute. Please see the Travel Coordinator for specific details.

F. Conflict Case Travel:

Conflict cases occur when the jurisdiction where the crime occurred is in "conflict" and is prohibited from prosecuting the case. In instances where travel is required, the travel guidelines are dictated by the travel policy of the "conflicted" jurisdictions. Please see the Travel Coordinator for specific details.

**IX. PAYMENT OF INTERVIEW EXPENSES**

- A. The Appointing Authority has the authority to approve payment of travel expenses for out-of-state job candidates who are invited to interview with Maricopa County or a Special District in accordance with the following provisions.
1. The Appointing Authority shall notify the Human Resources Director in writing and provide justification for paying interview expenses in advance of making any arrangements. The notice shall include justification that:
    - a. An attempt has been made to fill the position from a pool of candidates who do not require payment of interview expenses; and
    - b. The out-of-state candidate is one whose skills are in critically short supply; and
    - c. The labor market in the state is competitive for the particular position.
  2. All travel arrangements shall be coordinated by the Department/Special District Travel Coordinator and shall be paid by the County/Special District in compliance with the federal per diem guidelines.
  3. Interview expenses shall include airfare, lodging, parking, and ground transportation; expenses for meals shall not be permitted.

**X. ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES OR EXCEPTIONS FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS**

- A. As Elected Officials, and pursuant to A.R.S. §11-626 the Board of Supervisors are responsible to the taxpayers of Maricopa County. Therefore, there is no higher level authority within the County structure that can be defined as the Approval Authority for the Board. To ensure appropriate checks and balances are in place, the Board of Supervisors are required to obtain the signature of another Board Member prior to the final reconciliation of travel documents, not prior to travel.
- B. As an Elected Official and responsible to the taxpayers of Maricopa County, the Approval Authority for all Elected Officials (except the Board of Supervisors as defined above), will be the highest non-elected position or designee within their specific department.

## APPENDIX A

### Frequently Asked Questions:

**Question 1:** What are the presumptions regarding the most advantageous method of transportation?

**Answer:** To maximize the effectiveness of County/Special District resources allocated to travel activities, all travel plans should be a combination of the most economical and safest travel, lodging and cost of employee time. Employees are encouraged to maximize the use of available reduced fares. (Section V.A.)

Travel should be limited to the most cost-effective method available giving consideration to safety and other concerns. The most economical means of transportation will be used in traveling to and from airports. To determine the most cost-effective method of transportation, the Department/Special District should consider direct costs as well as the traveler's time. (Section VI.A.)

**Question 2:** Can I expand or alter my travel plans for personal reasons?

**Answer:** The traveler will travel to the destination by the usually traveled route unless the Approval Authority authorizes a different route. Reimbursement will be limited to the cost of travel by a direct route or on an uninterrupted basis. The traveler will be responsible for any additional costs that are incurred. (Section V.G.)

**Question 3:** What is my liability if, for personal convenience, I travel by an indirect route or interrupt travel by an indirect route?

**Answer:** In the best interests of the County/Special District, reimbursement for transportation expenses will be limited to the amount equal to the most economical mode of transportation. (Section VI.A.)

The traveler will travel to the destination by the usually traveled route unless the Approval Authority authorizes a different route. Reimbursement will be limited to the cost of travel by a direct route or on an uninterrupted basis. The traveler will be responsible for any additional costs that are incurred. (Section V.G.)

**Question 4:** What should I do with the compensation an airline gives me if it denies me a seat on the airplane?

**Answer:** Any promotional benefits or material received from an airline or other commercial establishment in connection with official travel may be retained for personal use. (Section VI.A.1.) (Also, see Travel Manual.)

**Question 5:** May I keep compensation the airline gives me if I voluntarily give up my seat on my scheduled flight when the airline asks for volunteers?

**Answer:** Yes. Any promotional benefits or material received from an airline or other commercial establishment in connection with official travel may be retained for personal use. (Section VI.A.1.) (Also, see Travel Manual.)

However, there should be no significant change to the original travel plans and the change should not incur any additional expense. Any change to travel plans which incurs additional expense(s) must be justified as County/Special District business and approved in writing by the Approval Authority. (Section V.G.)

**Question 6:** Under what circumstances may I rent a car?

**Answer:** The use of rented motor vehicles must be for the advantage of the County/Special District and not for the personal convenience of the traveler. The use of rented motor vehicles should only be considered when rental of a vehicle would result in an overall reduction in the budget expenditure for a particular trip. (Section VI.A.2.a.) (Also, see Travel Manual.)

**Question 7:** Will I be reimbursed for the cost of the collision damage waiver (CDW) or theft insurance on the rental?

**Answer:** The comprehensive and collision liability insurance offered by the rental car company should be waived when renting a motor vehicle. The County/Special District's self-insurance program provides coverage for physical damage and liability provided the employee is driving within the scope of employment. If the traveler chooses to purchase the comprehensive and collision insurance, be advised that the County/Special District will not reimburse this expense. (Section VI.A.2.b.) (Also, see Travel Manual.)

**Question 8:** What am I reimbursed when I use my private vehicle if the vehicle is determined by the Approval Authority to be in the best interest of the County/Special District?

**Answer:** Reimbursements will be made as per Administrative Policy A2324 – Use of Private Vehicle for County Business. (Section VI.A.3.d.) (Also, see Travel Manual.)

**Question 9:** What will I be reimbursed if I park my privately owned vehicle at the airport terminal while I am in travel status?

**Answer:** Long-term parking may be reimbursed **only if** the following applies: If the traveler can demonstrate that it is less expensive to utilize long-term parking rather than pay for round-trip airport shuttle or taxi service, then long-term parking may be claimed as an expense. If the long-term parking option is utilized, the traveler shall provide a quote (may be a written statement from a verbal quote) from a shuttle or taxi service which will verify the savings. It is the traveler's responsibility to determine and use the most economical option for travel to and from the station. Receipts are required. (Section VI.A.4.e.)

**Question 10:** When may I use a shuttle or taxi service?

**Answer:** A shuttle or taxi service may be used when it is determined to be the most economical means of transportation when traveling to and from airports. (Section VI.A.)

**Question 11:** When does per diem entitlement start? Stop?

**Answer:** A traveler must be in authorized travel status to be eligible for reimbursement of per diem and related travel expenses. (Section VI.B.) Travel status starts at the time the traveler departs from his home, office, or other authorized point and ends on the day the traveler returns to his home, office, or other authorized point.

**Question 12:** If my Approval Authority authorizes per diem reimbursement, will I still receive an M&IE allowance for a meal if the meal is provided by the airline or for a complimentary meal provided by the hotel or conference?

**Answer:** An allowance for meals (which includes tips) may be claimed in accordance to Federal Travel Management Policy **except** the traveler is not entitled to a reimbursement for a meal if it is provided free on an airplane or is included in conference or seminar registration fees. (Section VI.B.1.a.) (Also, see Section III – Definitions "Meals")



**Question 13:** Are laundry, cleaning, and pressing of clothing expenses reimbursable?

**Answer:** Expenses incurred for laundry, cleaning, and pressing of clothing are reimbursable as miscellaneous travel expenses **only after** the traveler has incurred five (5) consecutive nights lodging in travel status. (Section VI.B.1.d.)

**Question 14:** Are taxes included in the lodging portion of the per diem rate?

**Answer:** No. The lodging rate is the base rate before taxes and other items are included. (Section VI.B.2.d.)

**Question 15:** With regard to lodging, when is actual expense reimbursement warranted?

**Answer:** Expenses for lodging will be reimbursed by using the lower of the rates detailed in FTMP or actual costs. If lodging expense could not be obtained at the rate cited in FTMP, a memorandum must be attached to the travel authorization explaining why it is in the best fiscal interest of Maricopa County or the Special District for the traveler to stay at a particular facility and a signature by the appropriate Approval Authority on the explanatory memorandum is required. (Sections VI.B.2.d. and e.)

**Question 16:** Can I make my own travel arrangements?

**Answer:** Each Department/Special District has a Travel Coordinator who has the specific responsibility to manage and coordinate travel activities. At the time a travel need has been identified, please contact your specific Travel Coordinator and they will advise you. Under no circumstances should travel arrangements be made without the knowledge of the Travel Coordinator. (Section II.K. and L.)